

Our Young People

Tommy's Alphabet.

"Now this is A," mamma would say;
"And this is Q, and this is U,
And this is I."
Now say them—try."
Oh! Tommy was a youngster yet
To learn to say his alphabet;
But, bless his heart! though he was
small,
He knew his letters—nearly all.
So mother pointed, and her son
Began to name them, one by one.
"This one?" "It's B." "And this?"
"It's C."
"And this?" "It's L; I know it well."
"Nay, try again!"
"It must be N."
"And this one?"—pointing to an I—
"That's YOU!" was Tommy's quick
reply.
Mamma, the error to undo,
Now pointed to the letter U.
Small Tommy pondered; then quoth
he,
His face aglow with smiles, "That's
ME!"

—St. Nicholas.

Tommy's Business Venture.

(By Ella Guernsey.)

Tommy wanted some money. He
hadn't many chances to earn it, though
willing, very willing to work pretty
hard for it.

He wanted \$10 before the next
winter's winds and snows shut the
Lane family in for days, inside the
little red farm house at Maple Grove
farm, five miles from a neighbor.

Ten dollars would, if divided right,
bring weekly and monthly bright peri-
odicals from different portions of the
busy world into their own little house.

And then when the blizzards came,
and he sat at the little round table
getting his daily lessons, mother and
father, too, could spend the hours de-
lightfully, sitting beside the fire read-
ing something very "good."

It is not nice to be "shut in," when
your home is a small cabin away out
upon a prairie, if you have nothing
new to read and very few neighbors,
and those living out of sight.

Tommy's home was part dug out.
Their fire in the window was fed by
bundles of twisted grass, sunflower
seed, corn stalks, dry weed stalks, and
sparing handfuls of coal. Coal was
precious. Wood was very valuable.

Tommy helped with his strength
the loving mother gather, in their sea-
sons, first, the wild strawberries, then
raspberries, plums, grapes, and hoe in
the garden from planting until harvest
time.

Between them they had filled jars
and glasses full of nice fruit for winter
use, gathered in a supply of pumpkins,
squashes, beans, potatoes and other
good things, which were stored in the
"cave" for the rainy days when they
could not work.

Tommy helped his father, too, in
the "crop" tending and gathering. Mr.
and Mrs. Lane thought their little lad
a "wonderfully bright boy." At twelve,
Tommy was stout and tanned.

All through the winter he had, while
"studying" under Mrs. Lane's direc-
tions, been trying to plan a way to earn
at least ten dollars, talking over his
desires with both father and mother.

Before planting time rolled around,
Mr. Lane one day said:

"Tommy, couldn't you raise seed
corn to sell? I mean if I give you a
patch and break it for you, can you
plant and tend it without help? The
corn that I am planting I paid five
cents for each ear. It is very fine for
this climate. I have now quite a start,
and can supply you with enough to
raise quite a crop. You must also try
planting the several varieties of pop
corn. There is the rice grained and
the large yellow."

"That's the very thing! Of course
I can tend a crop! Mother! mother!
we'll have 'em, we'll have 'em by next
November!" shouted Tommy, as he
went to pick out his share of the fine
corn.

The "ground" was broken, the corn
planted. Tommy had managed to get
together seven varieties of fine corn
besides the pop corn.

Friends from Buffalo, after hearing
of his wonderful plan, sent him pack-
ages of the very best varieties, the
early roasting ears, also field corn.

Tommy's mother became interested,
and could not resist helping "just a
little."

The lad laid out his rows with care,
saying "he wanted every row straight."
The grains sprouted well, the tender
blades grew thriftily, and Tommy
battled royally with the crows, taking
care that the mules and cows did not
have the opportunity to trample down
his growing "crop."

The weeds grew fast, and Tommy's
hoe had to "swing" out lively some-
times to keep them down.

Mrs. Lane, pitying the tired and hot
little fellow, often wanted to rest him,
but he had a chivalrous care over her,
and gently put her aside with, "It
doesn't seem just right, mother, for
women to hoe, when there are boys to
do it."

Late in October that harvest was
gathered, and packed in large baskets
ready for market.

A neighboring farmer came over to
look at the exhibit, which presented
an attractive appearance.

"Well, done, Tommy," said neigh-
bor Ewing, looking at the heaps of
well filled out ears of corn. "You'll

sell that in Carney for a good price,
as this and the adjoining settlement
are settled up with farmers that need
just what you have to sell. It is al-
ways a satisfaction to me to know that
the article I am selling is going to help
somebody. There isn't an inferior
variety of corn in the lot you've
raised."

"I couldn't have done so well with-
out father and mother to help me.
Father thought it out for me," returned
Tommy, pleased and happy.

"Tommy has earned a reward, for
he has toiled manfully to raise his
crop," said Mrs. Lane proudly, and
neighbor Ewing said:

"I'll warrant ye, work tells on any
crop."
The seed corn was taken to the
nearest town, fifteen miles away, and
left with the storekeeper, who also
kept the postoffice.

A few weeks later neighbor Ewing
went "to town," and asked about Tom-
my's corn, if there had been a demand
for it.

The postmaster replied:
"A pretty considerable demand.
Every grain has been sold, and folks
come now as 'un' for more of that Lane
seed corn. Carry this to Tommy, an'
tell him I don't charge him anything
for sellin' his corn, as I'm an admirer
of such industrious little fellows, and
want to lend 'em a helpin' hand."

When the several silver dollars were
handed Tommy by neighbor Ewing,
he laid it all in Mrs. Lane's lap, say-
ing:

"Mother, it'll make us happy all
through the long winter. There'll be
something for you an' father too. Say,
mother, can't we have a school here
for those who will come and study
with me?"

Of course Mrs. Lane said "yes."—
[Arthur's Home Magazine.]

A Nation of Stilt-Walkers.

A boy's idea of using stilts is to find
a method of walking that is difficult
and requires skill. That a community
of people should be compelled to use
stilts, in order to do their work and
get about the country, is almost un-
known. It is not singular that these
people become so expert that they can
knit while walking on stilts.

The stilt-walkers live in the south
of France, on the shores of the bay of
Biscay and near the borders of Spain
—so near that they have acquired
many habits of the Spanish people.
The country of the stilt-walkers is
Landes. Very many years ago the
people were driven to stilt-walking.

The wind from the bay of Biscay blew
the fine, white sand far inland, making
what we call dunes, which are waves of
sand that remind you of the motion of
high waves. They look like waves
suddenly turned to sand. It was im-
possible to walk over this sand, and all
the grass and other vegetation suffer-
ed and was choked by it.

The people were shepherds, but it be-
came harder and harder to find feed-
ing-ground for the sheep. Then the
government made the experiment of
planting pine forests. These grew,
and prevented the sand drifting in as
before. Still, walking is very difficult
and almost impossible for women, ex-
cept by the use of stilts. When the
people walk on the ground, they walk
in their bare feet. The leg is covered
with a footless stocking. The foot-
rest of the stilt is covered with sheep-
skin, with the wool uppermost, making
a soft rest for the foot. The pine for-
ests not only saved the land from utter
desolation, but it gave the people em-
ployment. The collection of resin is
the most profitable industry in this
section. The wool of the sheep is of
such a poor quality that it brings a
very poor price in the market.

The people are a happy people and
have an interest in sports. They have
stilt-races, and some racers have
national reputations. One, recently,
was a long-distance race from Paris to
Bordeaux, which aroused interest
among scientists. The distance was
300 miles, and it was covered in 76
hours and 55 minutes. The stilts
used in this race were 65 inches in
length, but the ordinary walking stilt
is 45 inches. The stilts weigh about
five or six pounds; the pole, which is
always carried and used for balancing,
weighs about five pounds. Bull-fight-
ing is encouraged, but cows are used
instead of bulls. So prevalent have
these bull-fights become that the gov-
ernment has interfered, and attempts
to regulate them.

Grim Jestings.

Death-bed jokes are generally not
authentic. The celebrated one attrib-
uted to Tom Hood, for instance—
that he protested against blaming the
undertaker who had blundered into
coming before the great wit was dead,
and said that the man had "only come
to urn a lively Hood"—is known to be
decidedly apocryphal.

Nevertheless, a remark, somewhat
of the same sort, which is attributed to
Lord Chesterfield in his last illness, is
undoubtedly authentic. Chesterfield
was very ill, and his death was only a
matter of a few weeks; but his physi-
cian advised that he be taken for an
easy drive in his carriage, and he went
out.

As the equipage was proceeding
slowly along it was met by a lady who
remarked pleasantly to the great in-
valid:

"Ah, my lord, I am glad to see you
able to drive out."

"I am not driving out, madam,"
answered Chesterfield; "I am simply
rehearsing my funeral!"

With The Poets.

If I Had the Time.

If I had the time to find a place
And sit me down full face to face
With my better self, that stands no
show

In my daily life that rushes so,
It might be then I would see my soul
Was stumbling still toward the shining
goal;
I might be nerved by the thought sub-
lime,

If I Had the Time!

If I had the time to let my heart
Speak out and take in my life a part,
To look about and to stretch a
hand

To a comrade quartered in no-luck
land.
Ah, God! If I might but just sit still
And hear the note of the whip-poor-
will,

I think that my wish with God's
would rhyme,
If I had the time!

If I had the time to learn from you
How much for comfort my word could
do;
And I told you then of my sudden
will

To kiss your feet when I did you
ill—
If the tears aback of the bravado
Could force their way and let you
know—

Brothers, the souls of us all would
chime
If we had the time!

—Richard E. Burton, in Woman's
Journal.

Statistics.

I.

So many men, on such a date of May,
Despaired and took their hopeless
lives away

In such an area, year after year;
In such another place, it would
appear

The assassinations averaged so and so
Through August after August, scarce
below

A given range; and in another one,
March after March, it seems there
were undone

So many women, still about the same,
With little varying circumstance in
their shame;

Burglaries, arson, thefts, and forgeries
Had their own averages as well as
these;

And from these figures science can
discern
The future in the past. We but return
Upon our steps, although they seem
so free.

The thing that has been is that which
shall be.

II.

Dark prophet, yes! But still somehow
the round
Is spiral, and the race's feet have found
The path rise under them which they
have trod.

Your facts are facts, yet somehow
there is God.
—William Dean Howells, in Harper's
Magazine.

A Whitechapel Lullaby.

Sweet, my child, my sweet, my child,
Seven long days I've known thee
dying,

Watched thine eyes with famine wild,
Felt my breast thy food denying.

Blame me not, my child, my sweet,
When thou art where angels lead
thee;

Look at mother's wounded feet,
Worn in search of food to feed thee!

In that land of plenty where
God is father, Jesus brother,
Sweet one, keep me in thy care;
When thou canst, come back for
mother.

Tell God I am spent with tears
In a land that knows not pity;
Ask, why wait these many years
Judgment on the cruel city?

—John C. Kenworthy in the New Age.

Occupations for Convalescent Children.

Every mother, elder sister, and
maiden aunt knows something of the
difficulty of finding safe and pleasant
occupation for the children who are
too well to lie quietly in bed, but not
well enough to be released from the
nursery or even from the couch.

Recent experience with a child of
4½, under a slight surgical operation,
a severe burn, and the measles in quick
succession, has brought the subject
vividly before me, and I am sure some
one will be glad of suggestions.

A narrow couch, over which the
sewing-table can be set, makes a con-
venient place for the child to play
without getting uncovered.

Blunt scissors, a flower catalogue,
and a bit of mullage will amuse the
child for hours. A paper of fashions,
with crayons or colored pencils, affords
a pleasant change. If the appetite has
to be coaxed, a little tray with little
dishes, even the toy tea-sets, and a
play tea-party, which mamma will at-
tend, "all dressed up" for the occasion,
will dispose of many a gruel ordered
by the doctor, but not relished by the
child unless garnished by some such
loving make-believe.

A cup of rice, pearly barley, or
tapoca, with a paper funnel and a few
wide-mouthed bottles, will afford de-
lightful occupation for hours. A cheap

coffee-mill, screwed to a heavy board,
with a supply of roasted rice or corn,
will metamorphose a fretful child into
a happy miller, who will sell flour or
it away as the times demand. A
magnet with a few nails, pins, and
needles, is another safe and pleasing
occupation. Two or three marbles, to
roll around the tray by gentle tipplings,
afford noise enough to gratify the child
without distracting the household.

Our boy was the happy possessor of
a marble train, and when the bell at
the station became monotonous to his
ear he substituted his xylophone, in-
cluding it so that each marble literally
ran down the scale, producing a very
pleasant tinkle.

A paper of the finest tacks, a small
soft board change the miller or steam-
car conductor to a carpenter, who may
be the postman next hour by having
old envelopes made into a little packet
with a rubber band. The news of the
child's own improved condition and
patience in bearing pain and confine-
ment, which these letters may carry to
distant relatives, will often suggest a
beautiful ideal which the child will
strive to attain.

Mention need not be made of
kindergarten employments for the
child that has folded papers or woven
mats.

A cup of lentils, a gill of beans,
especially black and mottled ones,
with a few small boxes, will afford
much pleasure. To be allowed to
have the opera-glasses a few moments,
to use an ordinary hand magnifying-
glass, to dress up a clothes-pin, to put
the stamps on the letters for papa, to
open the papers and letters when they
come, afford delight so out of propor-
tion to the trouble involved that one
is inspired with zeal in discovering all
the pleasures that can be extracted
from the commonest materials.—The
Outlook.

Colors for Rooms.

A man who has given the subject
much thought has laid down a few
rules which are worth thinking about.
"I have not," said he, "put yellow into
a sitting-room in ten years, with the
exception of the little that gets into a
gold paper, and when I hear about
Whistler's yellow room it makes me
shudder."

"Yellows are all right for a hall or
vestibule, but they must not be used
in any room in which one rests or
reads or works. Why? Because yel-
lows do not absorb any light, but are
strong reflectors, and the reflected rays
of light are not only trying to the eyes,
but positively affect the brain and the
spirits, causing a distinct disturbance
of the nervous centers. So the modern
scientific decorator, at any rate, tells
us, and we believe him."

"So you see the old Pompeians
were right when they cooled off their
atria and patios by painting the town
red. The only other color which ap-
proaches Pompeian red for coolness,
so the elegant and artistic young work-
man told me, is dark green, but it has
been found to have so depressing a
mental effect on most people that it is
very sparingly used. Then I was told
lots about mass effects, distance shad-
ows, and length lines, and I don't
know what else, but quite enough to
convince me that the decoration of
our house interiors is conducted upon
a plane so lofty that it is impossible to
say whether it is an artistic science or
a scientific art."—[The Upholsterer.]

No man ever yet did a wicked act without
first being rebuked by his conscience.

Half Dead, Half Price.

By falling from a cart, a Melbourne
Chinaman, whose life was insured for
a large amount, was seriously hurt.
There was some doubt as to his ever
getting better, and at length one of his
friends wrote to the insurance com-
pany: "Hong Wang Lee half dead;
like half money."

Mortifying.

The man that boasts is on the high
road to humiliation. Something like
that seems to be the lesson of an
amusing little tale reported by the
Cincinnati Tribune. It concerns the
boyish son of a Presbyterian minister
of that city.

He had been suffering from tooth-
ache, and at last his father said:
"Well, John, 'we'll go to the dentist
tomorrow and have the tooth ex-
tracted."

John was not much elated over such
a prospect, but he made the best of it,
and straightway began bragging to the
few of his playmates about the fear-
ful ordeal that he was to go through.
It was an awfully big tooth," he told
them. The dentist would have to use
both hands to pull it, and most likely
would be obliged to call in his assist-
ant.

Well, the next day came, and in due
course the boy found himself in the
big operating chair, on each arm of
which he took a good grip.

The dentist looked into the open
mouth, smiled, took up a small steel
instrument, thrust it under the offend-
ing tooth and literally pried it out.

The boy looked at the tooth, and
then at the dentist. Then he walked
across the room, saying not a word,
and began putting on his overcoat.
His father followed him and asked:
"Did it hurt you, my son?"

"That was too much for the hero.
Two big tears started down his cheeks."

"Hurt!" he said. "Hurt! Why, he
didn't pull my tooth out. He just
took it out with a tack-lifter."

A Smile And a Laugh.

Adolphus—Why, Ethel, are you
looking at me so intently?
Ethel (dreamily)—I was gazing at
vacancy, Dolly.

A naturalist tells us that a snipe has
a nerve running clear down to the end
of his bill. So has the plumber. How
wonderful are nature's works!

New office boy—A man called here
to thrash you a few minutes ago.
Editor—What did you say to him?
Office boy—I told him I was sorry
you wasn't in.

Reporter—What do you think of
America?
Swell Britisher (just landed)—Don't
know till I see the morning papers.
They will probably tell me.

A small boy of four summers was
riding on a hobby horse, with a com-
panion. He was seated rather uncom-
fortably on the horse's neck. After a
reflective pause, he said:

"I think if one of us gets off I could
ride better."

An Englishman recently had his life
saved by a \$500 wad of greenbacks,
which warded off a bullet aimed at
him. With such simple means of pre-
caution as this at our elbow, every-
body should be prepared for an
emergency.

Superintendent (to citizen sweeping
the streets in the hot sun)—You'd
better put on your hat, Mike. This
blazing sunshine will affect your
brains.

Mike—Sure, do you think I'd be
sweeping the streets, if I had any
brains, sir?

A ROW IN THE NURSERY—Mother
(interposing)—What is this fresh
quarrel about, children? And you,
Robert, why have you been scratching
your little sister?

Robert—Mamma, this is how it was.
We were playing at Republic.
Yvonne had been President for a full
quarter of an hour, and she wouldn't
resign.

A lady once asked Rowland Hill
when he was minister of Surrey
Chapel if he would kindly interview
her son and examine him, for she felt
sure he had special talents for the
ministry, although they were hidden.
The preacher examined the youth, and
then wrote to the mother: "Madam, I
have shaken the napkin, but I cannot
find the talent."

Said an honest Marshfield farmer in
1776, as he met the clergyman of the
village very early in the opening day,
"Ah, good mornin', parson! Another
fine day." Then he nodded his head
significantly toward the sun, just
appearing above the cloudless horizon
of Massachusetts Bay, and added,
"They do say the air's moves and the
sun stands still; but you and I, parson,
we git up airy, and we see it rise."

The poet Tennyson was very fond
of telling the following story: A Scotch
minister and his congregation were
praying for rain, and the minister, to-
ward the end of his improvised prayer
that was repeated by the congregation,
prayed particularly for a certain Lind-
say MacCrugger, a favorite of his in
the parish; and this was the form of
his supplication:

"O Lord, send us rain! But there's
a worthy uld mon, Lindsay Mac-
Crugger by name, that needs the rain
we're askin' for more'n the rest. Ye'll
know his field by the big tree standin'
in the middle of it."

A writer in the Church Standard
says that a guide in the Holy Land
made the following historical explana-
tion to some Americans by whom he
was employed:

"King Saul, you know, was called
Paul after his conversion; and you can
always tell a Churchman, for he never
fails to speak of him as St. Paul."

This recalls the old story of a stupid
candidate for orders in Oxford who
had been repeatedly plucked in his
"exam." It was at last decided to
ask him one easy question, and let him
go through if he answered it correctly.
The question selected was:

"What was the former name of St.
Paul, the great Apostle to the Gen-
tiles?"

As the examiners hoped, the young
man answered "Saul," which was cor-
rect. But just as they were breathing
a sigh of relief over his success, the
young fellow, proud of his achieve-
ment, and anxious to show how much
more he knew, turned back after he
had opened the door, and added, "He
was the son of Kish."

Hold Love Sacred.

Edward Emerson tells us, in his
book on his father, that Mr. Emerson
never allowed in his home the slightest
levity concerning the great disturbing
passion as it entered young lives.

There is nothing more coarse and cor-
rupting than flippant gossip and shal-
low humor concerning this bitter-sweet
experience which waits upon the un-
tried years of youth. Whatever it is,
it is something solemn, something
sacred, judged either by its present
intensity or its future fruitage. Perish
then the irreverence that makes light

of this serious subject. The worst
profanity of our day, is that which
profanes with a joke the awful sanc-
tities of a young girl's heart, the critical
solemnities of a young man's soul.
Let all the outward fancies of religion be
visited with the iconoclast's hammer;
let the sacraments of the church be
trampled; let the name of God fall
flippantly from trifling lips—all this
defamation, sad as it is, is not so sad
as the greater defamation that makes
merry over the mystic movements of
the God within, the measureless po-
tency that presses against the valves of
the heart with the weight of a millpond
supplied by the springs and rivulets
that had their rise in far-off ancestry,
that represents the stream of history,
the pressure of evolution.—[Unity.]

Nice Gruel.

A missionary's wife, Mrs. Paton,
had been very ill on a lonely island in
the Pacific, and when she recovered
sufficiently to write to her friends at
home, she thus described one of her
experiences:

When I was able to take an
intelligent view of my surroundings,
this is what I first remember seeing:
John (her husband), sitting by my
bedside, with an old straw hat on the
back of his head, and a huge tin basin
between his knees half full of what
tasted like very thin, sweet porridge,
with which he was feeding me lovingly
out of the cook's long iron spoon!

He assured me it was water-
gruel; that he had got into the way of
making it nicely now; but that he
could not find a clean dish on the
premises to put it in!

He was so proud of his cooking that
I asked for the recipe, and you have it
here: Equal parts of meal, sugar and
water—a cupful of each for one dose;
boil all together till there is a smell of
singeing, whereby you know it is
sufficiently cooked!

He knew too much.

A story is told in the India Rubber
World of a meek-looking stranger,
with a distinctly ministerial air, who
applied for permission to look over a
large rubber factory. He knew nothing
at all about the rubber business, he
said, and after a little hesitation he
was admitted.

The superintendent showed him
about in person, and the man's ques-
tions and comments seemed to come
from the densest ignorance. Finally,
when the grinding-room was reached,
he lingered a little, and asked in a
hesitating way:

"Couldn't I have a specimen of that
curious